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- Please communicate via Questions box to:
  - If you're listening with others in the room, please notify us of their participation
  - Submit questions at anytime; we'll stop periodically and have open Q&A at the end
- The webinar is being recorded
- The video and slides will be posted within 1 week

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Poll: Who is with us?

- Please use the poll to tell us if you're participating today on behalf of:
    - A nonprofit organization
    - A municipality, planning district or regional commission
    - A soil and water conservation district
    - DEQ or other state agency
    - Other

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2021 Section 319(h) NPS Implementation Program Request for Applications

Questions and Answers

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July 22, 2020

Good morning and welcome to the webinar for the 2021 319(h) NPS Implementation Program RFA. Today's webinar is scheduled from 9:30-noon. The first hour will cover Q&A about the RFA itself. The last hour and a half will offer guidance for completing the application materials.

The link to the RFA text and application materials can be found using this link. Click on the first bullet on the page. **add link to RFA to the chat** NOTE: eVA is showing 6 documents. Three of these are the original RFA and App Materials. The other three are the updated versions we submitted yesterday. We'll cover the changes between these versions later in the first part of the webinar. For the purposes of this webinar, open the most up-to-date versions to follow along. There is also a Q&A document that is missing. We're working with eVA to make sure that document is posted and the earlier versions of the RFA and application materials are removed to reduce confusion.

If you have trouble with audio, try using your phone to dial in, instead of your computer's audio (VoIP)

The voice you'll be hearing for the next 2+ hours is mine, Lauren Linville. In non-pandemic times, I work in DEQ's Central Office in Richmond. I help coordinate implementation projects that are managed by my counterparts in the regional offices. I authored this RFA and will be leading the process with invaluable input and guidance from the NPS regional coordinators and my colleagues here at CO, namely Nicole Sandberg and Kelly Meadows.

Today's webinar is in two parts. The first is a brief presentation on the contents of the RFA and open Q&A session. The second is a longer training on completing the application materials. The goal of both presentations is to equip applicants with general, but comprehensive information on this funding opportunity.

Overview

- RFA summary
- Checklists for types of projects
- Education and outreach
- What a project can't be
- Budgeting
- Application materials
- Resources
- Changes since publication
- Q&A

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RFA summary: basically what's on the first page of the RFA

Checklists – required elements

Examples of outreach and education

What a project can't be: similar to non-eligible activities, or those that aren't eligible as stand-alone activities

Budgeting: match and TA:BMP ratios

Application materials: what you must submit

Resources: where to get help and turn when you have questions

Stop for questions

Poll: Have you applied for 319(h) funding from DEQ before?

- Yes, many times (4+)
- Yes, 2-3 times
- Yes, only once before
- No
- No, but I've partnered with an organization on a previous application

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RFA Summary

- What is 319(h) funding?

- Who can apply?

- What can they apply for?

- Where they can work?

DEQ

What is 319(h) funding?
Funding for NPS/319(h) comes from the EPA to DEQ. The purpose of the funding is to address NPS pollution, which are identified in Implementation Plans (IPs) that EPA has approved. Work must occur under an approved IP and within an approved IP area. (Provide link for NPS Funding page on DEQ website). Note: I use NPS/319(h) interchangeably. NPS can refer to more than 319(h) funding, such as the Clean Water Revolving Loan fund or Water Quality Improvement Fund grants; however for the purposes of this webinar consider NPS funding to mean the 319(h) funding DEQ receives from the EPA to address nonpoint sources of pollution. The term TMDL is also used here and there as well. Generally we've been moving in the direction of referring to implementation projects/plans funded by 319(h) as NPS or 319(h)-funded as a more inclusive term because not all implementation plans are based on a TMDL. Still, if you're a grantee working on a project based off of a TMDL implementation plan, I can see where you'd use TMDL instead of NPS or 319. Again, just for the purposes of this presentation, think of NPS and 319 and TMDL Implementation as one in the same.

Who can apply for 319(h) funding?
Local governments (including counties, cities, and towns), county health departments, soil and water conservation districts, Virginia institutes of higher education (universities, colleges, etc.), planning district commissions, regional commissions, nonprofit environmental organizations, and agencies/departments of the Commonwealth of Virginia. (page one of RFA)

What can they apply for?
Funding must be used for on-the-ground implementation with the expectation that the bulk of a project will be implementing BMPs. Why? Because BMPs installed are the surest way to improve water quality. Generally, BMPs from IPs fall into four categories: ag, septic, pet waste, and urban/suburban. That's because a good chunk of VA's approved IPs were developed to address a bacteria TMDL and these are proven BMPs for tackling those sources.
Therefore, the RFA focuses on these types of BMPs when we cover implementation activities:
- agricultural BMPs, like stream exclusion and riparian/forested buffers
- septic BMPs to fix or replacing failing septic systems
- urban BMPs, like bioretention and permeable pavement
- pet waste BMPs, like residential-size composters and pet waste stations

Where can they work?
Open Table 1 (provide link for Tables 1 and 2). Note that some folks may need to zoom in on the screen depending on your screen size and existing display settings.

RFA Summary Continued

- Funding available – $100,000-$300,000
- Match requirement – 30%
- Project length – up to three years
- Timeline
  - Aug. 31, 2020:   Deadline
  - Sep. 1-Nov. 30:   Application Review
  - January 2021:   Selection Status Notification to Applicants
  - February 2021:   NOIA Publication
  - Oct. 1, 2021:   Project Start Date
  - Sep. 30, 2024:   Latest Project Start Date

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Look at top right corner in red text for where to find what we're covering on the slides within the RFA.

Funding available
Awards of between $100,000 and $300,000

Match requirement
30% of what you're requesting from DEQ. We will discuss more in depth in budgeting slide.

Project length
Up to three years
Partners with existing 319(h)-funded projects may need to adjust timelines for new projects based on existing projects. Pretty sure all existing projects are set to end by 9/30/21, but if those are extended, the start date for any new project may need to be pushed back as well. Discuss with your NPS region coordinator
Newer projects may be able to start sooner. All depends on funds availability.

Timeline
Could be minor shifts
Reasons for gap between February and October 2021? Applying to EPA for the funds. Won't receive them until Fall 2021. Sometimes funds come in sooner or there are other funds available that allow for projects to start sooner. Don't apply for projects to start sooner. We'll discuss those with applicants during review or later.

Poll: Who attended the Project Development Webinar on May 20th?

- Yes
- No
- What webinar?

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Agricultural BMP Project Checklist

☑ Partners with Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD) (if not already a SWCD)   See Section III on RFA page 5

☑ Access to DCR's Tracking System

☑ Uses BMP Specifications from Virginia Agricultural Cost-Share Manual (VACS) and/or NPS BMP Specifications

☑ Has process for identifying and recruiting participants
    See Edu & Outreach on RFA page 3

☑ Plans for how funding will complement or work with any VACS funding available

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These checklist slides will cover what applicants should ensure are determined in their applications. All should directly link back to an application question. The slides may look familiar because we used a version of them in the Project Development Webinar held on May 20, 2020. I've added red text next to some of them linking directly to sections of the RFA where we point out these requirements.

Starting with Agricultural BMPs, which DEQ requires are implemented using a cost-share model where the cost of the BMP implemented is shared with the agricultural landowner. For projects implementing these Ag practices, they must:

1. Partner with a soil and water conservation district, assuming that the applicant isn't already a SWCD. SWCD's are the state's foremost experts in Agricultural (Ag) BMP implementation through their administration of DCR's Virginia Agricultural Cost-Share program, which goes by the acronym V-A-C-S or "VACS". SWCDs the access point for DCR's Tracking System, which NPS requires for tracking Ag BMPs (among others) so another reason why they're necessary partners.

2. Cost-share for implementing Ag BMPs must use specifications for those BMPs that are in the VACS manual or the NPS Specifications

3. Know how you will ID and recruit landowners to participate in cost-share program – consider contingency plans if outreach strategies don't pan out as anticipated (most don't).

4. Plans for how you'll coordinate available funding for producers to maximize their participation/implementation. Especially important where VACS funding is also available, but consider other funding like NCRS,

Agricultural BMP Project Checklist Continued

☑ Uses Cost-share Contract (via DCR Tracking and DEQ's BMP Contract) **See O&M on RFA page 3**

☑ Follows Bid Procedures in <u>VACS Manual</u>

☑ Obtains Engineering Job Approval Authority (see section 5.3 of <u>NPS BMP Manual</u>) **See Section III on RFA page 5**

☑ Apply Conservation Plan Requirements and Biosecurity Considerations (see <u>VACS Manual</u> for both)

☑ Can issue 1099-G for cost-share greater than $600

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5. All landowners receiving cost-share funding need to sign a BMP Contract. Accessible via DCR's Tracking System and the BMP Contract in the BMP Manual.

6. Multiple bids are required for the work (competitive process) and grantees must ensure applicants follow and document the bid procedures outlined in the VACS Manual.

7. Approval for Ag project designs must come from someone with a DCR-issued EJAA…whether that's someone on the grantee's staff, a partner's staff, through jointly-funded with VACS or USDA/NRCS since the approvals for that funding will ensure proper EJAA, or contract with a PE.

8. NPS has requirements for conservation plans and biosecurity considerations for all Ag BMPs in NPS implementation areas. More about those special considerations is in the VACS Manual.

9. Grantees must be able and willing to issue 1099-G tax forms for cost-share it administers over $600.

Septic BMP Project Checklist

☑   Partners with local/county health dept. **See Section III on RFA page 5**

☑   Access to DCR's Tracking System or DEQ's BMP Warehouse

☑   Uses BMP Specifications and Residential Septic Guidelines from NPS BMP Manual

☑   Has process for identifying and recruiting participants
See Edu & Outreach on RFA page 3

☑   Uses BMP Contract (via DCR Tracking and DEQ's BMP
12   Contract) **See O&M on RFA page 3**

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Before we move onto the Septic checklist, I want to note that items from the checklist come from RFA, but are all outlined in the NPS BMP Manual. Even though the RFA doesn't call for all of these, it will score applications based on their knowledge of DEQ's requirements for BMP implementation. Whether that's found in the NPS BMP Manual for Septic BMPs, DEQ's Stormwater Handbook for Urban/Suburban BMPs, etc.

1. The local/county health departments issue permits for septic work. They have staff who are experts and are critical resources. Can also be the source of referrals to cost-share programs.

2. To track BMP implementation, will need to have access to DCR's Tracking System or DEQ's BMP Warehouse. If using DCR's Tracking System, you'll need a partnership with a SWCD to access the Tracking System…assuming your organization is not already a SWCD. Any partner can access DEQ's BMP Warehouse as long as they have a log-in. To upload BMPs to the warehouse they'll use a template provided by the BMP Warehouse.

3. Cost-share for implementing septic BMPs must use specifications and guidelines for those BMPs that are in the NPS Specifications

4. Know how you will ID and recruit producers to implement BMPs – consider contingency plans if outreach strategies don't pan out as anticipated (most don't). Septic needs high volume of participation/contact (compared to Ag/urban BMPs) to be successful so consider that in outreach planning.

5. Must use BMP Contract from DEQ as it includes conditions required for federal funding

Septic BMP Project Checklist Continued

☑ Follows Bid Procedures (see section 4.6 of NPS BMP Manual)

☑ Develops Guidelines (within 30 days of contract start & annually. Template can be found in the NPS BMP Manual)

☑ Can issue a 1099-M tax form to participants receiving more than $600 in cost-share payments

☑ Familiarity with or knowledge of septic service providers in your project area

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6. Like Ag, multiple bids are required for the work and grantees must ensure applicants follow and document the bid procedures outlined in the NPS BMP Manual

7. Develop Septic Guidelines for cost-share that cover the landowner's eligibility for the program, how they should apply, and the associated administrative procedures. Guidelines for what should be in these guidelines is in the NPS BMP Manual and a template is available in that same document.

8. Org must be able and willing to issue 1099-M tax forms for over $600 in cost-share payments to homeowners

9. Know who the septic service providers are in your area. There are parts of the state that don't have licensed contractors to do some of the septic BMPs offered for cost share. This could be a major roadblock to implementation. The link here will take you to a VDH page with a map of septic haulers, installers, operators, OSEs, PE, etc. across the state.

Pet Waste BMP Project Checklist

☑ Uses BMP Specifications from <u>NPS BMP Specifications</u>

☑ Needs to be able to supply landowners with Landowner and Operations and Maintenance Agreements **See O&M on RFA page 3**

☑ Access to DEQ's BMP Warehouse

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1. Cost-share for implementing septic BMPs must use DEQ specifications for those practices.

2. There is no standard issue contract like there is for Ag and Septic BMPs, although DEQ can advise on what should be included in Landowner and Operation and Maintenance Agreements.

3. Pet Waste BMPs are only reported and tracked through DEQ's BMP Warehouse, which just requires a log-in and upload via a template.

Urban BMP Project Checklist

☑ Partners with local government staff and appropriate
stormwater professionals   See Section III on RFA page 5

☑ Has process for identifying and recruiting participants
See Edu & Outreach on RFA page 3

☑ Uses BMP Specifications
- DEQ's Stormwater Handbook
- DEQ & VA Tech's Stormwater BMP Clearinghouse
- VCAP BMP Manual and/or
- VA Stream Restoration and Stabilization BMP Guide

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1. Need to partner for technical expertise for design and design approval. Also may need to involve local government for permitting if necessary. A government agency issuing a permit may not necessarily be a partner in all projects, but it does make sense to investigate the permitting process and build that process into your timeline for the project.

2. Know how you will ID and recruit producers to implement BMPs – consider contingency plans if outreach strategies don't pan out as anticipated (most don't).

3. Cost-share for implementing septic BMPs must use specifications in any one of these four specification documents/manuals. Will need to ID which your BMPs will use.

Urban BMP Project Checklist Continued

☑ Needs to be able to supply landowners with Landowner
and Operations and Maintenance Agreements **See O&M on RFA page 3**

☑ Provides design

☑ Certification/documentation that BMPs won't "count"
towards NPDES/VPDES permit requirements

☑ Access to DEQ's BMP Warehouse

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4. There is no standard issue contract like there is for Ag and Septic BMPs, although DEQ can advise on what should be included in Landowner and Operation and Maintenance Agreements.

5. NPS will need a copy of the final design approved for the project file.

6. 319(h) absolutely can't be used to meet permit requirements. Urban projects should be going "above and beyond" what is required in those permits.

7. Need to have access to DEQ's BMP Warehouse.

WQM Project Checklist

☑ Aligns monitoring plan in the IP

☑ Ability to enter data into the EPA's Water Quality Exchange (WQX/WQX Web) database or the Chesapeake Monitoring Cooperative, which links to EPA's WQX/WQX Web database

☑ An existing DEQ-approved QAPP or time included to develop one

☑ Certification that WQM activity is not for research and BMP efficiency

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Last checklist isn't BMP implementation related, but does cover a type of project activity with its own requirements to cover in your application:

1. Water Quality Monitoring (WQM) activity must be called for the IP, which must call for same type of monitoring, especially if the IP includes details for monitoring such as parameters, sites, and samples collected per year.

2. Data will need to be uploaded to EPA's database (either directly or through the Chesapeake Monitoring Cooperative, which links to EPA's database. Be sure to include time and training to ensure staff can do that within the grant period.

3. A Quality Assurance Project Plan (QAPP) is necessary. Time to develop one or confirming that the one you have is already approved by DEQ.

4. WQM is not intended to be used for research or BMP efficiency. Which then begs the question…what CAN it be used for? Two good examples are:
1. Documenting progress in achieve water quality milestones in the IP
2. Identifying areas in the IP where pollutants of concern concentrations or loadings are the highest, which could assist in outreach and targeting of BMP implementation. Example, so maybe you're focused on 2-3 HUCs of an IP area for implementation. You could chose another HUC in which to do WQM for future project development.

Education and Outreach

- All education and outreach must have a connection to IP or BMP Implementation
- General education and outreach examples:
  - TMDL education (what is a TMDL? Why does it matter to you?)
  - Workshops and farm tours
  - Distributing septic maintenance guides
  - Encouraging public-private partnerships (e.g. – connecting realtors with Department of Health staff)
  - Boater education campaigns
  - Others?

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General environmental outreach, like anti-littering campaigns, and educating K-12 audiences is usually not a part of an IP. Those don't have a clear connection to the goals and milestones of an IP.

Outreach and educations geared towards signing up landowners to participate in a cost-share program, or curbing pet waste, are directly connected to BMP implementation and obvious choices for spending 319(h) resources. Other activities that aren't geared towards increasing sign-ups may also be eligible though:
- Getting folks familiar with the TMDL that spurred the IP and what voluntary actions they can take to support it
- Inviting community members to tour a demonstration site of an implemented BMP
- Septic maintenance guidance and education is a non-BMP implementation activity that does connect to voluntary practice adoption
- Networking between groups, like realtors and health dept staff, is another way to spread awareness of the benefits of BMP implementation
- Boater education campaigns about dumping and pump outs is another option
- Please use the Questions box to send us other examples you think of that we could include in the notes for this slide.

What a project can't be

- Where there isn't an approved IP
- To meet regulatory or legal requirements
- Design or WQM only
- Promotional materials
- Food and refreshments (very limited in scope)

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Hard no's:
- Any implementation outside of an IP area. Get to know your IP area and stick to it
- If you're required to do something by law, 319(h) isn't the right funding source for your project

Clarification on promotional materials:
- Yes to: newspaper, radio, TV, social media ads for cost-share program promotion. Same goes for direct mail. Door hangers, flyers, etc. are also OK.
- No to: PR and advertising to promote your organization, such as gifts, souvenirs, displays at annual meetings or conventions, etc. (doesn't include DEQ's Partners Meeting). Other examples of ineligible materials might be magnets, pencils, or other goodies that are handed out at a booth or public event.

Softer no's:
- Design and WQM OK, but project also needs to have BMP implementation
- Food and refreshments – allowed, but needs justification well documented

Budgeting

- Reimbursement only
- 30% match
  - Match exemption: reduce to 15% based on fiscal stress
  - DCR approval for VACS as match – needs 21 days to approve requests
- 35% limit on TA; up to 50% with exceptions
  - Administering sub-grants for multiple partners
  - WQM
  - New grantees

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35% is the baseline TA limit for all applicants
Can only exceed 35% TA if you are applying with some exceptions – will cover in Part II of the webina

Application Materials

- Application Questions – submit in Word format
- Application Form – submit in Excel format
- Documentation
    - Match – submit in PDF format as 1 file
    - Map – no format requirement, but must be 1 8 ½ x 11 size page
    - W-9 – no format requirement, but must be signed
    - Optional materials
- Submission instructions

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Application Questions
63 questions across eight categories. The eight categories align with the criteria on which the application will be evaluated. This is a shift from previous years where the Narrative Application Form had open response fields for each of the same eight categories. We changed this form this year for these reasons:
1. The questions combine the aims of the Narrative Application Form and the Narrative Application Guidelines, the latter of which was eight pages of very dense instructions that were unfortunately ignored more often than they were followed. The question prompts should result in easier to understand (and thus evaluate) project applications, with the added bonus of reducing the overall pages of our RFA materials.
2. There are many questions that most applicants won't have to answer or could provide one word (yes/no) or one-sentence answers to - very manageable. Will go into detail on the next part of the webinar.
3. The longest answer on the list should be no more than two paragraphs. No flowery prose, please! The questions are formatted so applicants can give straight forward answers.
4. The definitions and examples at the end of and hyperlinked throughout the questions should make it much easier for applicants to understand the questions and to know what to provide in their answers.
5. We were able to reduce some of the duplicate info between the Excel Application and Application Questions so that should help with application fatigue.
6. Some applicants had gotten too used to or comfortable with our old template (e.g. - not reading the directions, leaving things blank, copy/pasting sections of text from older applications). As you can expect, the quality of the applications went down.

Application Form
Updated, but not significantly different from last year's. Will go into more detail in part II.

Follow the requirements for file types when submitting documentation.
Have signatures where needed.
All match documentation letters should be packaged together in one file. Do not have them sent separately to DEQ – especially since I'm not in the office to receive them. Electronic is the way to go!

Optional materials: letter of support from non-match providing partners, description of previous accomplishments, a copy of the federally-approved indirect rate agreement

Submission by email only. Send to NPSGrants@DEQ.Virginia.gov.

Resources

- Look for IPs <u>here</u>
- Look for IP boundaries <u>here</u>
- NPS Coordinators **See RFA page 9**
  - Past activity
  - Water quality data
- Manuals
  - BMP Manual <u>here</u>
  - VACS Manual <u>here</u>
  - See RFA Sections II.C.1 for hyperlinks to other manuals/guidelines

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IPs and IP boundaries are your primary documents for putting together a project as the activities must be enumerated in the IP and within the IP boundaries.

NPS coordinators can tell you what past activity (BMP and WQM) has occurred in the watershed, which are both application questions.

As we covered in the checklists, the Manuals related to BMP types outline the requirements for implementing those practices. Your answers to the Application Questions should reflect your adequate understanding of these guidance materials.

Changes made to Application Questions as of July 22, 2020:
• Added definition for "roles" to question 46.

Changes made to Application Form as of July 22, 2020:
• Updated formulas on Tabs 4 and 4a
• Updated instructions for completing Tab 4a
• Added SAMPLE versions of Tabs 1-5 that can be accessed by unhiding them from the workbook.

Q&A document will be updated to include all the questions asked and answered during this webinar so you can find them all in one place.

Questions and Answers

• Please submit questions via Questions

• We will document questions and post them online

• We will have a video recording in addition to the slides with my notes

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